

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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1. In May 1953 the Chongsŏng-gun (N 42-39, E 129-45)(EC-6122) authorities were responsible for the security of the border between Manchuria and North Korea along the Tumen River between Hap'o-dong (EC-6214) and Ch'ŏnggang-dong (EC-6942). In August 1950 the North Korean Ministry of Health announced that there was an epidemic in the Kirin area of Manchuria and that the border would have to be closely watched to prevent the spread of the disease. As a result, in Chongsŏng (EC-6435) a Central Committee for the Prevention of Epidemics was established. It was decided to build sentry posts, at 500-meter intervals along the river, which would be manned by women during the day and by men at night. Actually, the government had used the threat of an epidemic as an excuse to increase the security of the railroad, and the sentry posts were built within five meters of the railroad line, not near the river.
2. On the Korean side of the border the Chongsŏng-gun police patrolled along the railroad tracks between the sentry posts, making the return patrol along the river. Occasionally, one or two customs officers in plain clothes walked along the river bank to watch for smugglers. When an individual was caught crossing the river to visit relatives or conduct personal business, he was usually only detained for a few days. If he was caught smuggling, all his goods were confiscated, and he was sentenced to one or two years in prison.
3. On the Manchurian side of the river, to prevent smuggling the Chinese Communist Government established police stations at K'ai-shan-t'un (EC-6227) and at Shihchien-p'ing (EC-6642), with branch police stations at Ch'uan-kou (EC-6334), Pai-lung-tung (EC-6538), Chi-ch'a-ch'u (EC-6002), Pei-hsing-chieh (EC-6009), and Ma-p'ai (EC-6747). Under the supervision of the police, militia patrolled the river bank making it extremely difficult for a person to cross the river undetected. If an individual was caught crossing from North Korea to Manchuria to visit relatives, he was usually only detained for two or three days. If he was caught while attempting to smuggle goods into the country, he was detained for a week and then sent to the North Korean police. If he was caught with more than 1.8 kilograms of opium, he was sentenced to be shot.

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4. The depth of the water along the stretch of the Tumen River under the jurisdiction of Chongsong-gun ranged from 1.5 to 3 meters. The majority of individuals crossed at Ch'onggang-dong, Chig'yong-dong (EC-6638), Hasambong (EC-6328), Kanp'yong (EC-6423), and Sinjon (EC-6221). Customs officials and police officers were free to cross the river at will.

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